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ABSTRACT

Educational development in Burma is discussed as part of a series surveying UNESCO's involvement in educational cooperation with developing nations. Several themes recur throughout the monograph--Burma's insistence on retaining independence in matters of educational policy, stress on developing an educational system cognizant with cultural values of Southeast Asia, and recognition that aid, grants, and loans from foreign nations and international organizations are necessary. Major achievements and problems in education since Burma's independence in 1948 are discussed. Achievements include introduction of computerization, expansion of technical and vocational programs, establishment of specialized institutions and laboratories, and extension of basic education programs. Problems include inadequate supplies, unclear priorities, relatively unimportant role of education within the Burmese government's economic development plans, uneven quality of experts sent by international organizations, and inadequate training of Burmese personnel to take over projects when experts leave the country. Several areas are identified as particularly promising fields for future international cooperation. These include development of curriculum in technical, agricultural, and vocational education: support for professional institutes: training of specialists related to social needs: promotion of educational research: and development of documentation and library networks. (DB)

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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN EDUCATION: THE BURMESE EXPERIENCE

by

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FOREWORD

Unesco's General Conference at its 19th session (Nairobi, Kenya, 1976) resolved that the Secretariat give particular attention to "gathering and disseminating information about new educational policies for the renewal of educational systems, adapted to specific needs on the basis of particular social, economic and cultural situations and aimed at promoting democratization of the systems within the framework of life-long education" (Programme Resolution 1.111).

In line with this mandate the Division of Educational Policy and Planning began in 1977 reproducing selected technical papers and distributing them as a series under the general title: "Reports, Studies ...". The aim of this series is to stimulate reflection and discussion on current issues confronting educational policy-makers, planners, administrators and school architects. Distribution is limited to Unesco officials at Headquarters and in the field, as well as interested technical personnel in governmental and private institutions. It is hoped that this series will promote and serve as a vehicle for increasing communication between individuals and institutions concerned with policy and planning aspects of education.

The "Reports, Studies ..." series consists of two sub-series : (i) papers with a subject orientation (numbered S.1, S.2, etc.) and (ii) papers focusing on a given country (numbered C.1, C.2, etc.). Subject papers deal with such topics as educational policies and legislation, planning and management techniques, planning and design of educational space and facilities, the relationship of education to productive work and employment, inter-country cooperation, the role of education in respect of the New International Economic Order, etc. Country papers are either brief profiles of the educational system of a particular country (mainly the LDCs) or treat a specific reform or aspect of the country's educational system.

Some of the papers reproduced in the series are "desk studies" based on information available within Unesco, others were originally prepared as background or discussion papers for a meeting or seminar, while still others are personal position papers representing part of a continuous dialogue within the Unesco Secretariat.

Papers are selected for the series on the basis of their topical interest. Readers should bear in mind that many, if not most, of the papers are working documents, unedited and not intended for public distribution. Some of the authors have written in a language other than their mother tongue, which explains certain linguistic deficiencies. It must also be stressed that the papers present the ideas of their respective author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of Unesco.

The Division of Educational Policy and Planning welcomes comments and suggestions concerning the series and invites readers to make known their reactions to particular ideas presented or to entire papers. In certain cases it may be possible to reproduce such comments and reactions in a subsequent issue of the series. For the convenience of readers who may wish to contact the author of a paper, the current contact address is given whenever possible.

AVANT PROPOS

La Conférence Général de l'Unesco, lors de sa 19e session (Nairobi, Kenya, 1976) a décidé que "la collecte et la dissémination de l'information sur les nouvelles politiques d'éducation pour le renouvellement et la réforme des systèmes d'éducation adaptés aux besoins spécifiques basés sur des situations sociales, économiques et culturelles particulières et qui ont comme objectif la démocratisation des systèmes dans le cadre de l'éducation permanente" (Résolution 1.111 du programme) se situent parmi les objectifs prioritaires de l'Organisation.

Conformément à ce mandat, la Division des politiques et de la planification de l'éducation a entrepris en 1977 la reproduction et la distribution de certains documents techniques, sous le titre général de "Rapports et Etudes ...". Cette série a pour objet de stimuler la réflexion et les discussions portant sur les problèmes courants auxquels doivent faire face les décideurs, les planificateurs et les administrateurs de l'éducation ainsi que les architectes scolaires. La distribution se limite aux professionnels du Siège et hors-Siège, ainsi qu'aux personnels d'institutions gouvernementales ou privées susceptibles de les trouver utiles pour leur travail. Nous espérons que cette série constituera un moyen pour promouvoir et augmenter la communication entre les individus et les institutions concernés par les différents aspects des politiques et de la planification de l'éducation.

Ces "Rapports et Etudes ..." se divisent en deux catégories: (i) les documents qui traitent d'un sujet (numérotés S.1, S.2, etc.) et (ii) les documents qui traitent d'un pays (numérotés C.1, C.2, etc. Les premiers portent sur des sujets tels que les politiques et la législation de l'éducation, les techniques de gestion et de planification, la planification et l'étude des espaces, constructions et équipements éducatifs, la relation entre éducation/travail/emploi, la coopération entre les pays, le rôle de l'éducation par rapport au Nouvel ordre économique international, etc. Les seconds présentent des profils du système éducatif d'un pays donné (principalement les pays les moins développés), ou traitent d'une réforme ou d'un aspect spécifique du système éducatif du pays concerné.

Certains des documents reproduits dans cette série sont des "desk studies" basés sur des informations déjà existantes à l'Unesco, d'autres ont été préparés à l'origine pour servir de documents de base ou de discussion à des réunions ou séminaires, alors que d'autres encore, exprimant les positions personnelles des auteurs, se situent dans le cadre d'un dialogue permanent au sein du Secrétariat de l'Unesco.

Les documents sont choisis pour cette série en fonction de l'actualité du sujet traité. Les lecteurs doivent tenir compte du fait que beaucoup, sinon la plupart, des documents sont des documents de travail inédits et ne sont pas destinés au public. Certains auteurs ont rédigé ces documents dans une langue qui n'est pas la leur, ce qui explique certaines faiblesses linguistiques. Nous voudrions également souligner que les documents expriment les idées de leurs auteurs respectifs et ne reflètent pas nécessairement la politique de l'Unesco.

La Division des politiques et de la planification de l'éducation souhaite recevoir des commentaires ou suggestions au sujet de la série, et demande aux lecteurs de bien vouloir faire part de leurs réactions à certaines idées exprimées ou à des documents dans leur ensemble. Dans certains cas, il sera peut-être possible de reproduire ces commentaires et réactions lors d'une prochaine parution de la série. Les adresses des auteurs des documents sont indiquées afin de donner aux lecteurs qui le désirent la possibilité d'entre en contact avec eux.

RESUME

La Birmanie recouvra son indépendance en 1948 et le Conseil révolutionnaire prit le pouvoir en 1962. En ce qui concerne les affaires étrangères, la Birmanie s'est engagée sur la voie d'une "neutralité positive", plus communément appelée de nos jours le non-alignement, et s'est dissociée de la guerre froide, des alliances militaires et de toute confrontation avec les blocs formés par les grandes puissances. L'objectif national fondamental en matière d'éducation a été le développement d'un système qui répondrait aux besoins du pays et aurait pour but d'offrir à tous les citoyens une éducation de base, de leur inculquer les valeurs morales socialistes et de former des lettrés, des scientifiques, des techniciens, des ingénieurs et autres catégories de main - d'oeuvre qualifiée nécessaire pour mettre en oeuvre les Plans de développement économique national. La priorité a été accordée à l'enseignement des sciences afin d'accélérer le développement du pays et l'exploitation de ses ressources.

Bien que la Birmanie pratique comme politique de base l'auto-suffisance (self-reliance), elle encourage la coopération économique internationale dès l'instant où celle-ci présente des avantages mutuels et n'impose pas de contraintes. Ainsi, dès que les efforts dirigés vers le développement furent suffisamment développés, la Birmanie commença à s'intéresser à l'aide extérieure. L'année 1973 vit s'amorcer un tournant dans cette direction: la Birmanie adhéra à la Banque asiatique de développement, déposa sa première demande de crédit auprès de la Banque Mondiale et entama des négociations préliminaires avec les compagnies de pétrole étrangères pour l'exploitation du pétrole dans les eaux territoriales. Un Groupe consultatif pour la Birmanie fut créé en 1976.

L'aide étrangère accordée à la Birmanie a été faible au cours des années 60, atteignant seulement en moyenne environ 34 millions de dollars des Etats-Unis par an, y compris les réparations des dommages de guerre Japonais. Les années 70 ont vu s'accroître régulièrement l'aide étrangère qui en 1977-78 atteignit 253 millions de dollars des Etats-Unis. Les principaux partenaires de l'aide bilatérale sont le Japon et la République fédérable d'Allemagne. Toutefois, la coopération de la Birmanie avec d'autres pays de la région asiatique demeure peu développée et ce potentiel reste à exploiter.

Le montant de l'aide extérieure à l'éducation est insignifiant, s'élevant seulement à 0.56 pour cent des dépenses publiques consacrées à l'éducation au cours des années 1960 et à 1.41 pour cent dans les années 1970, atteignant rarement 1 million de dollars par an. Les sources principales d'aide à l'éducation sont l'UNICEF, le Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement et le Plan de Colombo. Bien que cette aide soit minime en termes de pourcentage, elle a contribué de façon significative au développement de l'éducation du fait qu'elle a consisté entièrement en dons en devises étrangères - d'autant plus importants que la part de devises étrangères réservée à l'éducation par le Gouvernement était très faible. Il convient de noter dans ce contexte que le pourcentage élevé d'aide financière allouée à la composante équipement de certains projets a pu faciliter le développement de la technologie indigène.

Les principales réalisations effectuées grâce à l'aide extérieure à l'éducation comprennent l'introduction de l'informatique en Birmanie, l'expansion méthodique de l'enseignement technique et professionnel, l'établissement d'institutions et de laboratoires spécialisés, l'octroi de certains services indispensables pour l'éducation de base, et la formation d'une nouvelle génération qui constituera le personnel technique d'encadrement de l'avenir.

Il existe bien entendu des problèmes dans le domaine de la coopération internationale en matière d'éducation: certains sont d'ordre structurel et d'autres sont d'ordre humain. Les problèmes de structure et le problème des priorités du Plan restent les plus aigus. Malheureusement, l'éducation se place très loin dans l'ordre des priorités figurant dans les Plans de développement économique élaborés par le Gouvernement et les perspectives d'aide étrangère à l'éducation sont plutôt sombres et préoccupantes du fait de la tendance générale des gouvernements donateurs et des agences multilatérales à suivre les priorités fixées par le Gouvernement. La Birmanie a également rencontré des problèmes en ce qui concerne l'équipement et les fournitures, les experts et les bourses; il faut souligner ici l'importance de pièces à rechange et de fournitures appropriées après l'achèvement d'un projet.

Les domaines dans lesquels la coopération internationale pourrait à l'avenir s'exercer avec le plus d'efficacité comprennent l'enseignement primaire, le développement des programmes d'étude, la diversification du système éducatif, la création et le soutien d'institutions supplémentaires de formation et de recherche, la recherche éducative et les services de bibliothèque et de documentation. L'expérience de la Birmanie dans le domaine de l'éducation non formelle, particulièrement en ce qui concerne les campagnes d'alphabétisation, pourrait être utile à d'autres pays en voie de développement.

SUMMARY

Burma regained her independence in 1948 and the Revolutionary Council came into power in 1962. The basic national objectives in education have been to evolve a system which would meet the needs of the country by providing basic education to all the citizens, imbued them with socialist moral values, and to produce scholars and scientists, technicians and technologists and other manpower required by the National Economic Development Plans while giving precedence to science education in order to develop the country and her resources.

Burma's foreign policy since her independence is positive neutrality now popularly known as Non-Alignment. Burma dissociated herself from the cold war, military alliances and the confrontation of power blocs. Although Burma's basic policy is Self-Reliance, it is in favour of international cooperation in foreign economic relations so long as it is without any strings and mutually beneficial. Thus when the developmental efforts gained momentum, Burma began to look for external resources and 1973 marked the watershed when Burma joined the Asian Development Bank, made its first application for the IDA loan and started preliminary negotiations for offshore oil exploration with foreign oil companies and 1976 saw the formation of the Consultative Group for Burma.

Foreign aid to Burma was meagre in the 1960s averaging only about U.S.$ 34 millions per year including the Japanese reparations. The early 1970s saw the steady increase reaching U.S.$ 253 millions in 1977-78. The main bilateral aid partners are Japan and Federal Republic of Germany. Regional cooperation remains poorly developed and the potential remains to be exploited.

Education aid is insignificant only amounting to 0.56 per cent of the public education expenditure in the 1960s and averaging only 1.41 per cent in the 1970s, rarely reaching U.S.$ 1 million per year. They are all totally in grants and the main sources of education aid are UNICEF, UNDP and Colombo Plan. Although it is insignificant in percentage terms, it has made significant contribution towards the development of education because it is totally in foreign exchange whose national share for education has been low.

The main achievements of education aid include the introduction of computerisation in the country, orderly expansion of technical and vocational education, establishment of specialised institutions and laboratories, provision of various basic services in basic education and training of a new generation who would be providing technical leadership in the future.

Problems naturally exist in international cooperation in education: some structural and some human. The structural problem and the problem of plan priorities remain most acute and the Burmese experience of other problems in equipment and supplies, experts and fellowships are discussed. It was noticed that the high percentage of equipment component in aid to Burma might even facilitate faster development of an indigenous technology. The importance of adequate supplies after the completion of the project is stressed and problems of experts and fellowships discussed.

Education unfortunately ranks very low in Government's priority in the Economic Development Plans and because of the natural tendency of the donor governments and multilateral agencies to follow Government's priorities, prospects for foreign aid in education is rather gloomy and worrying. Seven areas of educational activities have been identified as promising fields for future international cooperation while Burma's experience in Informal education especially in Literacy Campaigns might be of value to other developing countries.

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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN EDUCATION : THE BURMESE EXPERIENCE

by

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" Both sides have learned that cooperation for development means more than a simple transfer of funds. It means a set of new relationships which must be founded on mutual understanding and self-respect. "

Lester B. Pearson, et al.
Partners in Development,
Praeger Publishers, New York,
1969, p.6.

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY AND PLANS

Objectives

Burma became an independent republic outside the British Commonwealth on 4 January 1948, inheriting an education system characterised by an eminent educationist as a system with - " absence of ideals, parallel and unrelated types of schools, single-track curriculum, pre-occupation with book-learning and examinations, foreign medium of instruction and reliance on note-learning, non-provision of education in practical agriculture resulting in drift of abler youths from rural to urban areas, wastage and lapse into illiteracy, increasing unemployment of educated youths, low pay of teachers, and tendency to ignore the dignity of labour and the need for technical education."[1/]

1/ U Kaung, Octennial Report on Education in Burma (1947-48 to 1954-55), Govt. Printg. & Staty., Rangoon, 1956, p.6.

A statement of Educational Policy was announced by the newly independent Government in 1948. However due to circumstances beyond its control, it was only in June 1950 that measures to implement the Policy could be initiated. The measures were mainly administrative meant to alleviate the gross inadequacies of the system inherited.

In 1951, a six-men "Burma Educational Observation and Study Mission" was sent abroad for six months covering countries in Asia, Europe and America. Basing essentially on the recommendations of this mission and also other studies including the 1951 report of the UNESCO Education Mission to Burma, the "Education Plan for Welfare State " was evolved in 1952 with the following aims:

1. Establishment of universal literacy.
2. Production of sufficient number of technicians and technologists.
3. Up-bringing of responsible citizenry for effective participation in national economic and social undertakings.
4. Liquidation of illiteracy and production of citizens imbued with Bala Ngadan (five strengths), viz., physical, moral, intellectual, social and economic strength; and
5. Perpetuation of democracy.

Various measures were undertaken to implement the 1952 Plan; however, even while the Plan was implemented, a number of problems arose leading to expressions of dissatisfaction both in the press and the legislature. Problems were both physical (lack of buildings, equipment, furniture, etc.) and organic. As mentioned in a study 2/, the most

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2/ "Union of Burma" in Organisation of Education Planning in the Asian Region", Bull. Unesco Reg. Off. Edn. Asia, vol, iii, no.1, 1968,p.31.

conspicuous among the organic defects were :

1. persistent prevalence of 'wastage' in the primary stage of education with its close accomplice, relapse into illiteracy;
2. ineffectiveness of bifurcation and of diversified courses;
3. congestion of repeaters of two or more years' standing in the top classes of high schools;
4. necessity to enforce rigid, and consequently unpopular rules for readmission of repeatedly failed students into the same university classes to avoid over-crowding and ensure efficiency of instruction ;
5. exposition of general deterioration in the standard of instruction in all educational institutions; and
6. the problem of 'educated unemployed' assuming greater proportions and becoming more acute.

The general dissatisfaction of education in the country led to the formation of an Education Enquiry Committee in 1957 headed by the Prime Minister himself. However before the Committee could submit its final report, the Government was replaced on 2 March 1962 by the Revolutionary Council headed by General Ne Win, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.

The Revolutionary Council discontinued the work of the Education Enquiry Committee and on 30 April 1962 announced its policy declaration entitled "The Burmese Way To Socialism," wherein the policy on education was mentioned as follows:

" 17 (a). The Revolutionary Council believes that the existing system of education unequated with livelihood will have to be transformed. An education system equated with livelihood and based upon socialist moral values will be brought about. Science will be given precedence in education. Our educational target is to bring basic education within the reach of all. As regards higher education only those who have promise and enough potentialities to benefit from it will be specially encouraged."

Within the broad framework of the above policy, conferences (locally called seminars) were held for different sectors of education leading to the establishment of new systems of higher education in 1964, basic education in 1966 and technical and vocational education in 1972. Several Laws on education were passed and were later revised and in 1973 and 1974, five new Laws on education were promulgated, viz., University Education Law, Basic Education Law, Technical, Agricultural and Vocational Education Law, Educational Research Law, Board of Examinations Law. In each of the above laws, aims and objects of the sector concerned were further defined.

The educational policy and basic programme of work may broadly be divided into Quantitative Expansion and Qualitative Improvements and broadly summarised as follows:

Quantitative Expansion :

1. Expansion of the first level of education based upon an objective, scientific survey to ensure equalisation of educational opportunities and facilities throughout the country with the ultimate aim of the introduction of universal free compulsory primary education of five years in the first instance and extending the period of compulsion up to nine years in progressive stages.

2. Expansion of the second level of education including technical, agricultural and other vocational schools proportional to increase in (a) enrolment in the first level and (b) demand for skilled or technical manpower as estimated or projected in the Economic Development Plans.

3. Reorganisation of the third level of education, including post-secondary technical, agricultural and other vocational institutes to ensure (a) continuous flow of scholars and scientists necessary to man the various institutions and establishments; (b) a steady stream of technicians, technologists and managerial personnel to meet adequately the manpower required for the Economic Development Plans; and (c) reorientation of the research work to solve the national problems and establishment of seats of higher learning as national research centres.

4. Intensification of effort to improve the quality of teacher education and to produce teachers in adequate numbers.

5. Equalisation of educational opportunities as a means towards conservation and utilisation of available human resources and also to help develop the under-privileged and less-developed areas in the country.

6. Improvement of educational facilities, promoting at the same time the principle of self-reliance.

Qualitative Improvements:

1. Improvement of efficiency of teaching in the first level of education to realise at least (a) acquisition of permanent functional literacy as a minimum requirement;

(b) a basic command of rudimentary arithmetic and an awareness of nature and one's surroundings; (c) inculcation of socialist moral values and patriotism; and (d) improvement of the quality and morale of teachers in the primary stage of education.

2. Intensification of effort in the lower secondary stage of education to lay a firm and reliable foundation for successful and satisfying pursuit of further studies or vocational courses at the next upper secondary stage of education, special attention being given to bring about a marked improvement in the teaching of a prescribed second language, Mathematics and Science; and also the introduction of pre-vocational training.

3. Effective diversification of course of instruction in the upper secondary stage of education into : (a) technical, agricultural and vocational courses to meet the manpower needs of the Economic Development Plans; and (b) more academic type of basic education as a preparation for higher academic and professional studies and for post-secondary vocational courses.

4. Further intensification of efforts at the third level of education to produce specialists, technicians and technologists to meet the manpower requirements of the Economic Development Plans; and to reorientate the research work at various establishments of higher studies towards solving the problems of the country.

5. Effective enforcement of co-curricular activities including recognition of outstanding students, vacation work camps, involvement in production and socially useful work and production of text books and reading materials inculcating the socialist moral values.

6. Reforming the techniques of examination leading to an evolution of a better assessment of abilities of pupils and of a procedure for selection of students for higher academic and professional studies and post-secondary vocational institutes or courses.

7. Establishment of a permanent organisation for educational research and also serving as an educational documentation centre.

8. Organisation of literacy campaign to eradicate adult illiteracy.

9. Consolidation of the ground already covered by raising further the achievement levels of pupils/students, integrating the curriculum with production and life, evolving more effective methods of teaching, modernising the teaching materials and adapting the educational technology suitable to the country's resources, etc.

In 1975, the Central Committee of the Burma Socialist Programme Party, expressly recognised by the new Constitution as the sole political party in the country enunciated its Educational Policy with the following general policy objectives:

1. To bring the basic education within the reach of all.

2. To base it on socialist moral values.

3. To develop all subjects including science and technology necessary for socialist construction.

4. To nurture and produce scholars, scientists, technicians, technologists, skilled workers and professionals who are

imbued with socialist ideals and values and who are ready to serve socialist construction.

5. To train and produce working people with all round development.
6. To allow only those who have promise and enough potentialities to benefit from it to pursue higher education.
7. To enable workers to study for University degrees and post-graduate degrees and also to work while studying.

A total of 55 specific educational objectives were also mentioned, including Basic Education (17), Technical, Agricultural and Vocational Education (7), University Education (18), Educational Research (6) and General (7).

Mechanisms for Change and Reform

After Independence, the Government continued with the practice of forming periodically Education Enquiry Committees to examine and ascertain public opinion and make suitable recommendations for reform and changes. In fact, the last Education Enquiry Committee formed in 1957 was headed by the Prime Minister himself.

After 1962, the Revolutionary Government discontinued this practice and instead adopted the method of obtaining consensus by holding educational seminars (or conferences). Each seminar was on one field or theme and was attended by about 200 to 400 participants comprising education policy framers, administrators, university professors and teachers, inspectors, heads of institutions and teachers, researchers, prominent educators, journalists and writers, representatives of the Party and peasant, worker and youth organisations.

A working paper would be prepared by a special seminar committee and after the plenary sessions, the seminar was broken up into syndicates assigned with a special field or fields to cover.

Deliberations were made until a consensus was reached and were later reported back to the plenary session of the seminar. A report with the consensus reached on the problems was then submitted to the Ministry of Education for necessary action.

Since 1962, the following seminars have been held:

1964	April	University Education Seminar
1964	April	Medical Education Seminar
1964	October	General Education Seminar
1965	May	Teacher Training Education Seminar
1966	April	University Education Seminar
1968	October	Basic Education [3/] Seminar
1970	May	Technical, Agricultural and other Vocational Education Seminar
1970	May	Medical Education Seminar
1970	December	Tests and Examinations Seminar.
1974	July	Education Seminar (for all sectors)

Besides the periodical review seminars mentioned above, various Education Councils have also been formed under the respective Law to review, examine and supervise the sector concerned. These bodies have very representative memberships varying from 30 to 50 excepting the Board of Examinations and the Policy Direction Committee of Education Research Bureau which have fewer members.

3/ Since 1966, the term "Basic Education" has been used in Burma as defined in the Basic Education Law to include the education from 3-Rs to a level prescribed by the Government from time to time as a level required before entry to the different Vocational institutions or to the Universities.

Quantification of Needs

Before the advent of planning and economic plans, education budgetting was essentially an exercise of bargaining and compromise between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry of Education would exaggerate its needs while the Ministry of Finance would protect its final authority in allocation of funds and practised its art of trimming to perfection.

However, due to the enlightened policy of the Revolutionary Government "to bring basic education within the reach of all", expansion in the fields of education and health has been rapid, with the education expenditure doubling in less than ten years (Kyats 152 million in 1961-62 and Kyats 306 million in 1970-71) and growing at an annual average rate of 7% while the annual average growth rate of Gross Domestic Product for the period 1962-71 was only about 3.5%. The following years saw a slightly more slowing down of educational expansion due to economic difficulties caused by both domestic and external factors.

The annual expansion in education is determined by the following factors:

1. The need for allocation of more teachers in the existing schools due to increased enrolment.
2. Opening of more schools especially in the rural and remote areas with the ultimate aim of introducing universal free compulsory primary education.
3. Opening of more technical, agricultural and other vocational schools as and where feasible and possible.
4. Allocation to meet the new needs occasioned by the various reorganisations and reforms, new projects, etc.

The need for allocating more teachers in the existing schools due to increased enrolment is generally met in full as the State has undertaken to accept all who wish to attend any of the schools in basic education. The Government opened more schools each year to extend the educational opportunities and also with the ultimate aim of introducing universal compulsory primary education in the near future. In 1964, it was expected that by opening more schools each successive year along with the allocation of new additional teachers for the existing schools, the target for the introduction of compulsory primary education might be reached in 1975. However, because of the economic difficulties experienced in the later years, the target year of 1975 was abandoned although as shown in Table 1, new primary schools were given priority over the Middle (lower secondary) and High (upper secondary) schools, especially in the Second Four Year Plan period (i.e., 1974-78).

Table - 1

Annual Allocation of New Schools and Teachers in Basic Education

Year	Primary		Middle (Lower Secondary)		High (Upper Secondary)	
	New Schools	Additional Teachers	New Schools	Additional Teachers	New Schools	Additional Teachers
1966-67	408	2806	61	1863	1	385
1967-68	552	1583	75	745	6	112
1968-69	515	6647	61	1711	2	400
1969-70	700	1433	30	150	8	250
1970-71	800	2030	40	1116	5	450
1971-72	900	2080	40	1118	5	450
1972-73	-	-	-	-	-	-
1973-74	-	-	-	-	-	-
1974-75	1100	2517	20	800	5	500

1975-76	1100	3000	20	800	5	500
1976-77	1100	3000	20	800	5	500
1977-78	1100	3000	20	800	5	500

Source: Ministry of Education

Education expenditure already accounts for about one-fifth of the Recurrent Expenditure of the Government and is likely to rise in view of the Government's commitment to make primary education compulsory by 1980 and the popular pressures to provide more places in secondary schools. One projection envisages an annual increase of 16.5% of recurrent expenditure until the primary education has been made compulsory and thereafter an annual increase of about 8.1%.

Although establishment of more technical, agricultural and other vocational schools create less of a problem because of the evident need and utilitarian value of its products, the problem of expansion in the university education sector presents a more subtle, yet persistent and dangerous dilemma elusive of solution at the present moment.

When the University of Rangoon, the first University in Burma was founded in 1920, it created a wave of national dissatisfaction amongst the students and the populace. It was generally felt that the new University Act imposed undue restraints in order to limit the size and products of the University. From the dawn of modern nationalism, the Burmese people had looked to education as an instrument of national advancement and the various restraints were therefore keenly felt. It eventually led to the first national boycott whose political significance was later recognised by celebrating the day as " National Day ". Education has been an important factor in social mobility in the Burmese society where no social or class barriers exist.

Thus in recognition of the public sentiment, the University Act was later amended allowing more accessibility. This tradition continued for decades until the adoption of the new system of university education in 1964 when partial restriction was made.

According to the incomplete manpower plans, the estimated annual needs for fresh graduates numbered about 3000-4000 whereas the numbers already graduating from all the universities are about two and a half to three times the required figure. There are of course two possible solutions to this problem. The first solution would entail restricting university admission to a figure slightly more than the actual planned needs of the country. This would however involve restricting entry of many qualified entrants to the University and the likely sufferers would probably belong to the poorer and underprivileged class whose uplift and welfare the State has pledged itself to look after. Besides it would mean a selection of only some 3-4 per cent of the school final population which on the other hand might be politically explosive.

The alternative solution is to devise ways and means to absorb the surplus graduates in some useful occupations although it may not be appropriate with their training. The Government at the moment have adopted a middle course whereby restriction to university entry is made but at a figure higher than actual planned needs hoping that the improving economy might be able to absorb them at a later date. It may be of interest to quote the following extract from a confidential and classified report of a foreign agency relating to the matter under discussion:

> " Disparities exist but incomes are more or less equally distributed and in the field of education and health, Burma has achieved successes which surpass those of much richer countries. These achievements are still there x x x x x x

On the one side, there is a temptation to expand education further, because it is one method of opening up avenues through which the poor and deserving can get access to a richer and fuller life, and life-style. On the other hand, with so tiny a base of paid employment in industry, government and other services to which formal education is relevant, the rate of expansion in the supply of jobs must be extremely modest. It will be even more modest so long as the rate of development overall remains as low as is currently the case."

Decentralised Planning & Innovation

Burma is divided into 7 states and 7 divisions (all 14 being of equal status) and they are further sub-divided into townships (314 in all), each of which is composed of varying number of city wards and village tracts. At all three lower levels, there are elective People's Councils which serve as local organs of power.

In opening new schools, the Ministry of Education allocates the number to each division or state according to the number of village tracts which are still devoid of any primary school. The Divisional or State People's Council further divides the allocation it receives to the various townships under its charge according to the same principle although now taking into account factors like security, accessibility, level of development, etc. The Township People's Council then allocated the new schools to those village tracts in accordance with the criteria mentioned above.

Burma, like some Southeast Asian countries, is composed of many different ethnic groups of varying levels of development. Those that are most difficult to reach are naturally the least developed with

all its inadequacies. Cultural and linguistic differences, difficulties of access owing to lack of roads and dispersed patterns of settlement all play a role in this context. The Revolutionary Council in its policy declaration, The Burmese Way To Socialism (Article 16) maintains that "As the Union of Burma is a country where many indigenous racial groups reside, it is only when the soladarity of all the indigenous racial groups has been established that socialist economy which can guarantee the welfare of every racial group can be achieved. " In pursuant of this policy, great efforts are being undertaken to cater for these groups educationally. One notable effort was the establishment of the Academy for the Development of National Groups in northern Burma, near Mandalay.

The Academy tries to promote indigenous cultures and at the same time instils a sense of national identity to the students. It is essentially an institution to train primary teachers and community leaders and has a number of distinct and special features:

- its students come mainly from non-Burmese national groups; the 1972 enrolment includes students from 56 different ethnic groups;
- students are specially selected for their ability to become not only teachers, but community leaders as well;
- half of the time allocation is given to a liberal general education, and the other half to training in community development;
- the curriculum comprises, in addition to the normal school disciplines, basic economics, economics of cooperatives, political science, arts and physical education, together with principles of education. Furthermore, the boys are taught agriculture and industrial arts including making of farm tools and rural crafts, and the girls domestic science, basic midwifery and basic nursing;

- extra-curricular studies comprise fire-fighting, basic radio training, basic veterinary science, first aid and health education, adult education and accounts for the village co-operatives;
- the study of an indigenous language in addition to that spoken by the student to help overcome existing language barriers;
- Students develop their particular cultural heritage whilst learning to appreciate the need for national coherence and for collaboration between different ethnic groups for the country's development.

Upon completion of the four-year course, graduates must serve a minimum of five years in the areas they come from originally or other least developed areas. The 1977-78 enrolment comprised 670 students with a staff of 56.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

National Objectives & Policy

On attainment of independence, Burma chose an independent foreign policy of positive neutrality, now generally known as Non-alignment. Burma did not involve herself in the cold war, military alliances or confrontation of power blocs although Burma has not been reluctant in expressing her opinion in critical issues, e.g. Korea, Hungary and later in 1968 on Czechoslovakia.

In 1962, the Revolutionary Council continued and reaffirmed the basic principles of the foreign policy in the following terms:

" The Revolutionary Council and Government of the Union of Burma, desirous of maintaining and strengthening Burma's existing friendly relations with all countries, hereby make the following declaration:

1. They reaffirm their unswerving dedication to the ideal of peace, friendly relations and co-operation between all nations based on international justice and morality.

2. They reaffirm their wholehearted support for and complete faith in the purposes and principles of the United Nations as embodied in its Charter.

3. They reaffirm their conviction that the policy of positive neutrality pursued by the Union of Burma ever since her independence is the policy best suited to her in the context of the prevailing world conditions, and that its faithful pursuance best serves the larger interests both of Burma and of the world.

4. Accordingly, the Revolutionary Council and the Government of the Union of Burma look forward to the continuance of their existing cordial relations with all countries on the basis of the above stated policy."[4/]

This Independent Foreign Policy was reaffirmed in the First Party Congress of the Burma Socialist Programme Party held in 1971 and also in subsequent Party Congresses. In the context of foreign economic relations, the Political Report of the Party Organising Committee submitted to the First Party Congress of the Burma Socialist Programme Party states that " In building the Union of Burma into a socialist state, it was based on the principle of Self-reliance. But since the technological know-how and socialist accumulation of capital are still inadequate for the implementation of the projects of the Economic Development Plans, trade and economic co-operation without any strings and beneficial to the country were conducted with socialist, capitalist and other neutralist states in accordance with Burma's foreign policy of positive neutrality and the policy of foreign economic relations." [5/]

4/ Foreign Policy of the Revolutionary Government of the Union of Burma, Burma Socialist Programme Party, 1968, pp.5-6.

5/ Speeches of the Chairman of the Party Central Committee and the Political Report of the Central Organising Committee to the First Party Congress: 1971, Burma Socialist Programme Party, 1971, pp.131-132 (in Burmese)

Burma's basic policy was thus Self-Reliance and it remains as the national policy up to this day. Burma has always stressed the prime importance of economic independence for the maintenance and consolidation of political independence of the developing countries. Self-Reliance of course is given wide-ranging interpretations from complete autarchy to different degrees of self-sufficiency. It may therefore be said that there is always some elements of self-reliance in the economic policy of all developing countries. Almost all developing countries with programmes of industrialisation have varying degrees of emphasis on import substitution which are aimed at making greater use of their own resources thereby promoting development as well as self-sufficiency in those products for which new industries are set up.

Furthermore, the Government of Burma believes that self-reliance promotes the increase in momentum of the learning experience. Besides, it is believed that too much reliance on foreign capital would also reduce inducement to save domestically. This is further complicated by the political factor of private foreign investment.

In addition to the general factors mentioned above, there are also other specific factors which inhibit the governments of some developing countries borrowing from international organisations such as the World Bank, Regional Development Banks and the International Monetary Fund. These organisations impose a searching analysis not only of the viability of the project for which application is made for loans but also of the economy as a whole, and attach conditions which appear to infringe on the sovereignty of the State although these are admittedly also in the interest of the borrower.

In Burma, political considerations dominated for many years after 1962 and there was also a general resistance to the outside analysis and objectives of the Government. On the other hand,

it was realised that it will not be possible for sometime to mobilise sufficient resources, especially foreign exchange, domestically for the development of her rich natural resources and for the acceleration of the rate of economic growth. The need to fill the foreign exchange gap with external loans and assistance is thus recognised. Therefore, when the developmental efforts gained momentum Burma began to look for greater inflow of external resources and the year 1973 saw Burma joining the Asian Development Bank, making its first application for the IDA loan and the preliminary negotiations with foreign oil companies for offshore oil exploration.

The Consultative Group for Burma was formed under the auspices of the World Bank in 1976 and in the following year, Burma began to borrow from the market - a syndicated loan managed by the Chase Asia Limited and the Wardley Ltd for the oil industry. At the inaugural meeting of the Consultative Group in Tokyo the policy on foreign capital was emunciated as "Mutual Beneficial Economic Co-operation" and it was further clarafied at the Paris meeting of the Group in early 1978.

Aid Magnitude & Partners

In 1962 the amount of foreign aid received by Burma was Kyat 153 millions (U.S.$32 millions) of which Kyat 90 millions (U.S.$ 19 millions) constituted the War reparations from Japan. The foreign loans for the financial year 1961-62 was only Kyat 39 millions (U.S. $ 8 millions) borrowed from the U.S.A., China, U.S.S.R., and the World Bank - all negotiated before the advent of the Revolutionary Council. The loan from the United States constituted P.L. 480 funds, part of $ 25 million Development Assistance Loan and the Police loan. The Chinese loan was part of the £ 30 million interest-free friendship loan and the U.S.S.R. loan was for the construction of Kyetmauktaung Dam and

the "Gift" projects; and the World Bank loan being for railways, port and inland waterways. At the end of 1962-63, the external debt position was as given in Table 2.

Table - 2

External Debt at the end of 1962-63

Country	Amount (in Kyat millions)
U.S.A.	133.2
India	141.7
U.S.S.R.	38.2
People's Republic of China	20.0
World Bank	89.1
Total =	422.2

Exchange Rate in 1963 U.S.$ 1=K.4.79

Source: Report to the People for 1963-64, p.59.

After the assumption of power by the Revolutionary Council, two events took place which were to be of significance in the foreign economic relations of Burma. These events were the signing of the Burma-Federal Republic of Germany Protocol in July 1962 and the successful negotiation of the Burma-Japan Economic and Technical Co-operation Agreement which were to follow the end of the Japanese Reparations in 1963-64. These two countries became and continued to be major partners in Burma's aid scene.

The foreign aid to Burma remained small and insignificant during the 1960-70 decade, totalling Kyats 1641 million or averaging only about U.S.$ 34 million per year including the Japanese reparations. Japan is by far the largest bilateral donor whose reparations were followed by ETCA and the end of the decade 1960-70 saw a Yen Loan of 30 billions followed by loans for offshore oil exploration, commodity aid, refinery,

etc. The Japanese loan was mainly used in the Industrial sector and the industries and factories established included factories for light vehicles, heavy vehicles agricultural tools and implements, electronic products, fertiliser, ceramic, cement, paper and pulp, etc.

The other major aid donor is Federal Republic of Germany whose aid were mainly utilised also in the industrial sector with some projects in mining. The factories and mills established with the German aid included textile mill, brick and tile works, glass factory, fertiliser plant, etc. Other smaller bilateral partners are U.S.A., People's Republic of China, U.S.S.R., Holland, German Democratic Republic, India, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, France, Poland, Switzerland, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Italy.

The 1970s decade saw the steady increase in aid and in 1973, Burma joined the Asian Development Bank and also made the first application to the World Bank for a loan on transportation. The ADB loans cover several sectors and the projects include Pugyi Reservoir (water supply) for Rangoon City, Power Transmission, Forest Development, Fisheries and Offshore Fishing, Integrated Sugar Production, Rice Processing, etc. The first U.S.$ 33 million World Bank (I.D.A.) loan was for transportation (railways and inland waterways) and was followed by later loans for Forest Development, Irrigation, Telecommunications, Paddy-land Development, Tin Dredging, Livestock, etc.,

The Consultative Group for Burma was formed in 1976 and the aid for Burma jumped 2½ times in the following year. In 1977, the first borrowing from the market was made for the development of oil industry. In the following tables, Table 3 traces the development of foreign aid, Table 4 gives the nature of the foreign loans for the last four years, Table 5 indicates the utilisation of foreign loans by sectors for the previous four years and Table 6 summarises the external debt position at the end of September 1977.

Table 3

Development of Foreign Aid (Kyat Million)

Source	60-61	61-62	62-63	63-64	64-65	65-66	66-67	67-68	68-69	69-70	70-71	71-72	72-73	73-74	74-75	75-76	76-77	77-78 Revised Estimate
Foreign Loans and Grants	77	153	218	158	189	111	118	186	215	216	306	399	438	266	591	517	750	1,777
1. Loans	11	39	44	57	116	46	65	148	122	101	184	274	313	206	413	257	447	1,553
2. Grants	66	114	174	101	73	65	53	38	93	115	122	125	125	60	184	260	303	224
a) Japanese Reparations	63	90	150	84	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
b) Burma-Japan Economic and Technical Co-operation Agreement	-	-	-	-	60	44	41	35	67	61	73	75	61	37	65	95	82	-
c) Contributions from International Organisations	-	21	17	15	3	15	9	1	21	34	34	45	42	13	52	71	97	185
d) Colombo Plan	3	3	7	2	10	6	3	2	5	20	15	5	22	10	17	7	16	12
e) Bilateral Technical Assistance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	87	108	27

Sources : Central Statistical Organisation

Foreign Economic Relations Department (For Colombo Plan and Bilateral Technical Assistance figures only)

Note : 1. The grants figure is probably slightly understated. The Colombo Plan figure, for instance, does not include the cost of experts since it is not known.

2. The prevailing exchange rates are :

Exchange rate per U.S. dollar 1963-K. 4.790
1973-K. 4.062
1974-K. 4.810
1975-K. 6.678
1976-K. 6.707
1977-K. 7.007

3. 1960-61 to 1972-73, Fiscal Year = October to September
1973-74 Fiscal Year (only 6 months) = October to March
1974-75 to 1978-79, Fiscal Year = April to March

Table 4

Nature of Foreign Loans

(Kyat Million)

	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78 Revised Estimate	1978-79 Budget Estimate
A. Duration 15 years and above	176	372	1121	1139
1. America, United States of	-	-	-	-
2. Canada	-	13	30	4
3. Germany, Federal Republic of	15	25	140	72
4. France	-	-	80	47
5. Japan	58	75	207	527
6. U.S.S.R.	-	-	-	-
7. Asian Development Bank	23	79	385	243
8. I.D.A. (World Bank)	80	180	264	246
9. O.P.E.C.	-	-	15	-
B. Duration 5 to 15 years	43	73	397	448
1. China, People's Republic of	20	14	22	11
2. Czechoslovakia	-	-	-	-
3. France	-	-	48	-
4. Germany, Federal Republic of	-	-	20	-
5. Hong Kong (Chase Asia Syndicate)	-	-	181	110
6. India	-	-	-	-
7. Italy	-	-	-	-
8. Japan	6	-	30	263
9. Netherlands	16	58	45	-
10. United Kingdom	-	-	-	-
11. U.S.S.R.	1	1	50	-
12. Yugoslavia	*	-	51	64
C. Duration under 5 years	38	2	35	-
1. Czechoslovakia	27	2	-	-
2. Germany, Federal Republic of	-	-	35	-
3. Japan	8	-	-	-
4. India	3	-	-	-
Foreign Loans Total (A+B+C)	257	447	1553	1587

*Less than K. 0.5 million.

Source: Central Statistical Organisation.

Table 5

Foreign Loans By Sector

(Kyat Million)

	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78 Revised Estimate
Foreign Loans By Sector				
1. Agriculture	27	48	32	148
2. Livestock and Fishery	4	*	44	28
3. Forestry	3	3	50	195
4. Mines	52	29	35	20
5. Industry	144	69	40	441
6. Power	6	26	34	86
7. Transport and Communications	95	59	185	299
8. Construction	22	9	19	-
9. Trade	60	12	7	20
10. Finance	-	-	-	218
11. Defence	-	-	-	35
12. Local Bodies	*	1	1	63
Total =	413	256	447	1553

* Less than K. 0.5 million.

Source: Central Statistical Organisation.

Table 6

External Debt

(As at End September 1977)

(Kyat Million)

Country / Organisation	Type of Debt			Total
	1 to 5 years	5 to 15 years	Over 15 years	
1. Federal Republic of Germany	8.377	63.335	244.640	316.352
2. People's Republic of China	-	322.351	-	322.351
3. Japan	4.304	346.646	708.102	1,059.052
4. France	6.636	76.391	16.456	99.483
5. German Democratic Republic	-	17.317	-	17.317
6. United States of America	1.774	-	319.845	321.619
7. U.S.S.R.	1.714	15.297	10.991	28.002
8. Czechoslovakia	29.736	1.292	-	31.028
9. Italy	1.208	-	-	1.208
10. Netherland	-	53.948	-	53.948
11. United Kingdom	-	2.776	-	2.776
12. Yugoslavia	-	1.508	-	1.508
13. India	-	0.216	-	0.216
14. Canada	-	-	57.096	57.096
15. I.D.A. (World Bank)	-	-	388.612	388.612
16. Asian Development Bank	-	-	125.335	125.335
	53.749	901.077	1,871.177	2,825.903

Source : Report to the Pyithu Hluttaw for 1978-79, p.302

Burma joined the United Nations on April 14, 1948 and its subsidiary organs and Specialised Agencies soon afterwards. Burma has consistently supported the ideals and work of the United Nations. During the 1960s, the aid contributions from all the international organisations averaged about Kyat 15 millions (about U.S. $ 3.1 million) annually. It began to increase in the early 1970s to over Kyats 40 millions annually and it rose markedly with the coming of the IPF in 1973 reaching Kyat 185 millions in 1977-78. (See Table 3).

The UNDP: United Nations Development Programme and the UNICEF : United Nations Children Fund are the two principal sources of international assistance followed by Regular Programmes of certain Specialised Agencies, most notably WHO: World Health Organisation and the UNFPA : United Nations Fund for Population Activities in later years. The UNICEF is the principal source of fund for social sector while the UNDP provides for social sector as well as pre-investment studies and other development work.

Before their amalgamation, the UNDP (Special Fund) financed six projects contributing on an average about U.S. $ 486,000 per year between 1960-71 while the UNDP (Technical Assistance) Programmes contributed around U.S.$ 800,000 during the same period. The IPF: Indicative Planning Figure was introduced in 1972 and a Country Programme for five years was prepared for 1973 - 1977 on a figure of US $ 14.327 millions. However, because the Government of Burma curtailed the life of the First Four Year Plan to coincide the life of the Second Four Year Plan with the life of the new Pyithu Hluttaw (People's Congress), a Revised Country Programme for Burma was prepared for 1974-1978 with a new IPF of U.S.$ 35 millions. The Third UNDP Country Programme is under preparation and will start in 1979 and run through to December 1982. The IPF figure for Burma is further raised to U.S.$. 41.5 millions

for the current programming period (1977-1981).

The relative inputs of the various UN organs may be gauged from the following planned contributions as given in Table 7.

Table 7

Planned Contributions by UN Organisations for 1974-1978

(in Thousand US Dollars)

Source	Amount				
	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
UN Organisations : Regular Programmes					
WHO	555.3	562.9	660.0	765.0	810.0
UNICEF	1,586.0	1,715.0	2,150.0	2,150.0	2,250.0
UNIDO	50.0	100.0	150.0	150.0	150.0
IAEA	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0	45.0
Sub-Total =	2,236.3	2,422.9	3,005.0	3,110.0	3,255.0
UNDP (IPF)	3,000.0	3,000.0	3,000.0	7,900.0	7,900.0
(Programme Reserve)	300.0	875.0	500.0	500.0	500.0
UNFPA	600.0	600.0	300.0	300.0	300.0
Grand Total =	6,136.3	6,897.9	6,805.0	11,810.0	11,955.0

Source : Burma : Revised Country Programme Proposal for United Nations Development Programme Assistance, 1974-78; 6 January 1976, p.6.

The UNDP aid is especially appreciated because in the Government's view, the UNDP Country Programme plays three particularly important roles in relation to its Economic Development Plans : (i) it provides support for pre-investment work, which is not normally available from multilateral sources of finance, and thus helps to open access to multilateral investment; (ii) it provides assistance, not available from other multilateral sources, for technical activities which are not

necessarily large in terms of cost but which are of critical importance for national economic and social development; and (iii) it provides a source of assistance for projects of a multi-disciplinary, long-term character for which the United Nations system is regarded as having a special competence.

Under the Colombo Plan, the active countries are Australia Canada, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Japan. The amount of the Colombo Plan aid contributions varies from year to year and from country to country. For example, New Zealand has confined its aid to the field of technical education and it was substantial in the year when the contribution was made. During the 1960s, the Colombo Plan aid averaged Kyat 6.1 millions annually and has been increasing steadily in the present decade. The Colombo Plan contributions are given as a whole for each year in Table 3. Unfortunately, the cost of expert services provided is not available and is not tabulated. The fields covered by the Colombo Plan aid include education, health, roads and bridges, scientific and technological research, food aid, grain storage facilities, etc. and Colombo Plan fellowships have enabled many young and not so young students to study abroad.

The United Kingdon and Japan also offer technical assistance not included under the Colombo Plan. The other notable contributor of technical assistance along with its soft loans is the Federal Republic of Germany.

Regional Cooperation

Burma as a member of the United Nations participates in almost all the regional organisations and regional offices of the specialised agencies of the United Nations system, e.g. ESCAP : Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia, UNESCO Regional Office for Science and Technology, UNICEF Regional Office for East Asia and Pakistan, WHO South East Asia Regional Office, etc. Burma is also a member of some non-UN regional bodies most prominent of which are Asian Development Bank and IRRI : the International Rice Research Institute. Burma however is not a member of the ASEAN : the Association of South East Asian Nations and its subsidiary bodies and other regional organisations like SEAMEO: South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation.

Although Burma's export to Southeast Asian nations, especially Indonesia and Malaysia in Burma's principal export rice is quite substantial, the import trade from the region is still small, but it is nevertheless growing. Burma's major customers are Japan, People's Republic of China, the European Common Market and the Southeast Asian countries, while the European Common Market and Japan constitute principal sources of Burma's imports as Burma's predominant imports remain machinery and capital goods and raw materials for industries. Although the inter-regional trade with Southeast Asia is competitive in many commodities, yet it is complementary in many aspects, e.g. Malaysia exports palm oil to Burma and imports rice in return. The potential of inter-regional trade with Southeast Asia and Asia is quite high and remains to be exploited.

Japan and the People's Republic of China are two major aid donors in the region to Burma and there is very little mutual aid relationship with countries in Southeast Asia except for a few occasional training fellowships and for organisations with well-established relationship

like IRRI. The potential for trade and especially interregional technical cooperation is very high indeed and remains to be exploited for mutual benefit of the countries in the region.

Cooperation & New International Economic Order

Burma believes that NIEC : the New International Economic Order is a morally sound concept. At the national level, the concept of social justice and privision of social services for the benefit of all citizens is now accepted by almost all governments and the NIEO merely extends this concept of social justice from the national level to the international level.

It is believed that the NIEO will bring benefits to all the developing countries. The new order does not seek charity from the rich nations nor aim at equality of incomes. In fact, most developing countries do not aspire to the levels of wasteful consumption and deterioration of the environment that now prevail in many developed countries. On the contrary, the basic aim of the NIEO is to bring about equality of economic opportunity for the poor nations and to correct some long overdue structural weaknesses in the present world economic system that place them at an unfair disadvantage.

Indeed, the search for the new economic order is the natural second stage in the modern historical process of liberation of the developing countries. The first stage was characterised by political liberation extending from the end of the Second World War up to the 1960s. The second stage, which has just begun to gain in intensity and momentum represents a struggle for not only political but also economic liberty and equality since the former would not be meaningful without the latter.

The demand for a new international economic order is thus

a part of an historical process which can neither be achieved by the poor nations in one negotiation nor will it disappear by the simple indifference of the rich nations. The establishment of NIEO, in and of itself, would not bring economic progress to the developing countries. It would however create favourable conditions for progress to be attained primarily through the efforts of the developing countries themselves.

Based on the above view, the leader of the Burmese Delegation in his address to the twentyninth regular session of the UN General Assembly on October 8, 1974 said:

" Mr President, the world economy is now at the crossroads. Recent events as well as new sets of circumstances and relations have undermined its structure, its basic premises and its institutions. What is now imperative therefore, is to replace it with a new world economic order that is more in conformity with the changed circumstances, that is more equitable, and what is most important, that engenders a new sense of responsibility and co-operation for mutual benefit on the part of the international community.

We believe that the recommendations contained in the resolutions adopted at the recently concluded Sixth Special Session of the General Assembly have much to contribute to the creation of such a new world economic order. We would therefore like to reiterate our support of the principles embodied in the 'Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order' adopted at the Special Session and urge an early implementation of the provisions made in the 'Action Programme' for its establishment."

Burma believes that the NIEO is a cause worthy of continued endorsement and support by all the developing countries.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN EDUCATION

Magnitude and Value of Aid Streams

Amongst the foreign loans contracted by Burma, none is on education except for the training components of some projects. One attempt was made in 1973 with the IDA (World Bank) for a loan of U.S.$ 7,052,700 for external financing covering mainly the import needs for projects in the fields of pre-vocational education, technical education and animal husbandry training. It was however unsuccessful. The education aid received are thus all on grants.

From 1962 to 1970, total education aid received was about K.10.922 millions or an annual average of about K. 1.365 million (U.S.$ 0.285 million), coming to 0.56 per cent of the average public education expenditure of those years. The contribution made by the UNICEF constituted about one-half of the total aid received during the period. During the 5½ year-period of 1972-78, the aid in education increased to K.31.861 millions or an annual average of K.5.79 millions amounting to 1.41 per cent of the public education expenditure.

Table 8

Public Expenditure on Education & Education Aid

(Kyat Million)

Fiscal Year	Public Expenditure on Education			Education Aid	Per Cent
	Current	Capital	Total		
1972-73	337	15	352	3.417	0.37
1973-74	182	10	192	4.457	2.32
1974-75	365	19	384	3.062	0.80
1975-76	386	19	405	8.722	2.15
1976-77	419	17	436	5.717	1.311
1977-78	470	16	486	6.486	1.335
		Total =	2,255	31.861	Av. 1.41

Sources: Burma Education Research Bureau (for Public Expenditure on Education)
Department of Planning (for Education Aid)

Education aid forms a very small proportion of the total aid received. It averaged 0.78 per cent in 1962-70 and varied from 0.36 per cent to 1.69 per cent during 1972-78. Since education aid is totally from grants, it averaged 1.23 percent during 1962-70 and varied from 1.66 per cent to 7.4 per cent (in the peak year of 1973-74) during 1972-78 of the grants.

Table 9

Ratio of Education Aid to Total Aid & Grants

(Kyat Million)

	1962-70	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78
1. Total Aid	1,411	438	266	597	517	750	1,777
2. Total Grants	892	125	60	184	260	303	224
3. Education Aid	11	3.42	4.46	3.06	8.72	5.72	6.49
4. (3) as per cent of (1)	0.78	0.78	1.68	0.51	1.69	1.30	0.36
5. (3) as per cent of (2)	1.23	2.7	7.4	1.66	3.35	1.89	2.90

Sources: Central Statistical Office and Foreign Economic Relations Department (for figures on Total Aid and Total Grants)

Department of Planning (for Education Aid figures)

The amount of Education Aid received in U.S. Dollar equivalent are as follows:

Table 10

Amount of Education Aid Received in Kyats & U.S. Dollars

(Millions)

Fiscal Year(s)	Kyats	U.S. Dollars
1962-70	10.922	2.28
1972-73	3.417	0.713
1973-74	4.457	0.917
1974-75	3.062	0.637
1975-76	8.722	1.306
1976-77	5.717	0.85
1977-78	6.486	0.926

Source : Central Statistical Organisation (for prevailing Exchange Rates)

Although education aid is insignificant in total percentage terms, yet it makes significant constribution towards the development of education as it is all in foreign exchange and because the national share of foreign exchange is rather low for education due to its low priority. The international contribution towards the educational development in Burma is most significant and with lasting effects in fields and projects where the need is evident, the projects properly planned and phased, the international team and counterparts well selected and competent, where harmonious working relationships have been established and understanding and sympathy prevail.

Nature of Aid Projects & Impact

The three major sources of education aid in Burma are UNICEF, UNDP and Colombo Plan. The UNICEF provides for projects in Basic Education, while UNDP projects are mainly in the sectors of higher education and training, science and technology, and Colombo Plan mainly provides for Technical and Vocational Education.

The UNICEF is the prime agency in providing assistance in the field of basic education. It started operation in education in 1964-65 with the signing of the First Master Plan, other executing agencies participating in the plan being UNESCO for general and science education, FAO for agricultural education and WHO for health and nutrition education. The UNICEF inputs amounted to U.S.$ 1,223,000 between 1963 and 1969, with UNICEF looking after the supplies and equipment while UNESCO, FAO and WHO provided the necessary experts. The earlier projects include more effective general science teaching, vocational

agricultural education in agriculture biased schools, introduction of simple carpentry and agricultural education in primary schools, home economics, health and nutrition education, inservice teacher training, and more efficient language study. Later UNICEF enters the fields of local production of scientific equipment which brings down the cost of equipment as well as imparts technical knowhow to the local technicians, and text book production by providing paper for experimental editions as well as regular editions thus bringing down the price of the text books.

A sum of U.S.$ 583,000 was provided for 1971-72 to 1974-75 with assistance providing for vocational and pre-vocational education and other activities of the youth. The Second Master Plan was drawn in 1974 and the annual UNICEF contribution to education increased to over U.S.$ 500,000. The Plan became more pervasive, covering operations in planning and research, communication, execution, and quality control. The UNICEF activities however came to be restricted to primary education and the contribution was correspondingly reduced. 1978 saw the Third Master Plan which focusses particularly on the requirements of young children and those most in need of assistance. The 1977 allocation was U.S. $ 344,600 and projects worth U.S.$ 222,320 with prior approval was to be implemented in the same year.

The UNICEF aids have made positive impacts in basic education by providing supplies and equipment, introduction of skills and training in the production of science equipment thus help promote the teaching of science with the consequent modernisation outlook of the younger generation in the country, bringing down the price of primary text books and reading materials and making possible the production of experimental school materials, serving as a catalyst for many educational reforms, etc.

Technical and Vocational Educational Education are the two major fields whose orderly development have been made possible by the contribution of the Colombo Plan, notably Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The contributions made during 1962-70 amounted to Kyats 2, 209, 542 and Kyats 9,300,397 during the period of 1970-77, totalling Kyats 11, 509,939 (or U.S.$ 2,046,285). The Colombo Plan contributed the equipment and supplies essential for the opening of new post-secondary technical institutes in Prome, Chauk and Kalaw; and new technical secondary schools in Rangoon, Mandalay, Taunggyi, Moulmein, Henzada, Yenangyaung and Myitkyina. It also helped replenished the alreading existing technical institutes and schools and established a Technical Teacher Training Unit near Rangoon.

In the fields of higher education and science and technology the UNDP is the main catalyst. It introduces the first computerisation in the country by establishing the University Computer Centre. After and perhaps because of the initial teething troubles, the Agency and the Government both took keen interest in the project with the result that it is now the most lauded project. The UNDP is also responsible for the establishment or support of specialised and professional laboratories and institutions in agriculture, applied geology and departments of preventive medicine, tropical medicine, sanitary engineering, etc. The United Kingdom and Japan are joint sponsors of the Institute of Dental Medicine which has become one of the best professional institutes in Burma.

The UNICEF purse and UNESCO brain have rendered major support to the work of the newly established Burma Educational Research Bureau by providing supplies and expertise and exchanges of personnel imparting new outlook and providing with new ideas and trends.

Training fellowships under various projects and also those provided by International agencies, Colombo Plan and various Governments have enabled a whole generation of scholars and scientists, technicians and technologists to gain experience and advanced training abroad, exposing them to modern ideas and concepts and work-related experiences. The fellowships sent abroad under various agencies and schemes numbered about 200 annually and the trend is slowly moving from long-term training and studies towards short-term training and attachments. English, being the second language generally used in Burma, the English-speaking countries are predominant amongst the countries sent for further studies although Federal Republic of Germany and Japan are good close seconds. Unfortunately, interregional training facilities are still relatively unutilised and its potential remains to be tapped.

Some of the notable achievements accomplished by international cooperation in education during the last decade and a half are: introduction of computerisation in the country, expansion and consolidation of technical and vocational education, establishment of certain advanced laboratories in the fields of agriculture, medicine, dentistry, applied geology, etc., many services made possible in basic education, training of a whole new generation who would be providing technical leadership in the future, etc. All these would undoubtedly leave lasting impact on the country's development.

Problems in Aid Relationship

In the light of the recent experience in the International Cooperation in Education, the problems encountered may be categorised into: (i) structural, (ii) problem of priorities, (iii) equipment and supplies, (iv) experts (v) fellowships and (vi) the role of UNESCO.

Structural Problem: This problem is of recent origin and probably peculiar only to Burma. It nevertheless has serious consequences and affects all sectors and departments.

In a planned economy, planned growth and planned investment with plan ceilings for each sector and the department concerned are only natural and probably inevitable. In order to control the growth of the circulation of money and hence inflation, and also to finance the local cost of various development projects, the Burma Government have introduced structural changes in its taxation leading to the taxing of all incoming equipment and supplies provided by various agencies except those under the Colombo Plan.

Although foreign aid projects included in the Plan have all their counterpart expenses provided for in the annual budgets, those which are conceived during the current fiscal year and previously unforeseen are thus unprovided for and face the problem of various taxes and duties and other charges and the problem becomes especially acute if and when the amount is large. On some occasions, the tax, duty and port dues on a single assistance programme might amount to about one-third of the figure budgetted for that year. An anomalous position is thus created for the particular recipient department of being in a position better to refuse any assistance or aid thus offerred because the Government has not provided for its counterpart and local expenses and also unable to claim for it since supplementary budgetary claims are no longer allowed.

The problem needs urgent attention and immediate solution by the Government. The solution probably lies in abolishing all taxes and duties for equipment and supplies provided free through bilateral or multilateral grants or alternatively to create a reserve fund as a pool to meet the needs of such emergencies or to allow deferring of payment till the next budget and revision of the plan ceiling if necessary.

Problem of Priorities: Before the days of Economic Plans, social ideals and the desire to provide educational opportunites and other social amenities to the 'underserved' dominated the thinking of the nation's leaders. However, with the coming of the economic development plans, the plan priorities naturally favour economic sectors which will bring about the economic growth of the country creating in turn opportunities to employ more people thus giving an economic multiplier effect. The social sector including education was therefore placed 9th in priority, and therefore also of very low priority for investment, in the Second Four Plan (1974-78) being after agriculture, forestry, mining, transport and communications, livestock and fisheries, power, manufacturing and industry, and construction. There are only two sectors, viz., trade and other services ranking lower than social sector. The Third Four Year Plan (1978-82) unfortunately does not even maintain the status quo with the social sector changing places with trade and since " other services " has now been abolished, the social sector now has the honour of ranking last in the Plan's priorities.

Unfortunately for education, there is a general tendency for donor governments and multilateral agencies to follow government's priorities. On the other hand, the Government also tends to push and exert pressure for projects in its priority sectors while the aid agencies generally wish to oblige the government and favour its priority project requests. A recent example is Australia who used to be one of the principal sources of aid for technical education in Burma, but has recently diversified and shifted her aid resources into pump irrigation, water supply, grain storage, road building, etc.

In the UNDP's first Country Programme, education received a share of 33.9 per cent ranking first (but with impact on other sectors like agriculture, mining, industry and health), but probably

partly because of the readiness of the education projects when the country programme was framed. However, in the Revised Country Programme, these were reallocated to different sectors including agriculture, mining, industry, health, and science and technology. The purely education sector received an allocation of only 7.3 per cent and the end of the programme saw an implementation rate of only 0.9 per cent.

If the tendency of the donor governments and multilateral agencies to follow the recipient government's priorities continue (which incidentally is only natural), it is most likely that international assistance in education would still further decline with the unfortunate consequence that it might not be able to maintain the standards achieved at the moment.

Equipment & Suppliers: One significant aspect of the Burma projects in general is its relatively high equipment component. In the First Country Programme of the UNDP, the equipment component was 48.8 per cent and the Revised Country Programme retained the above figure at around 50 per cent. The New Zealand and Australian Colombo Plan aid and UNICEF contributions are also mainly in equipment and supplies. Given Burma's inadequate foreign exchange to finance her development plans and the relatively high level of trained manpower, it would appear reasonable for such an allocation even on purely economic terms. Besides, the utilisation of the equipment will be an essential element in improving the technical knowhow of the Burmese officials and technicians, in facilitating the adaptation of imported technology, and in developing an indigenous technology.

One factor which planners tend to overlook is the problem of supplies of recurrent nature. Although it is natural that the Government should take over at the end of the project and be able to continue with it unaided, yet several factors could prevent the efficacy

of the finished project by lack of imported supplies due especially to its low priority or social nature resulting in only a token or even non-allocation of foreign exchange. In such cases, equipment slowly fell into disuse and decay obliterating all the efforts spent and its benefits denied. In this connection, the UNICEF and Colombo Plan authorities should be commended for their foresight in the provision of supplies for their projects to last for years after the completion of the projects.

One small but significant contribution made by Burma in her education sector was the careful scrutiny of the equipment and supplies to be provided under various assistance programmes. For instance, instead of ordering the whole standard UNICEF home economics kit, Burma indented only for the sewing machines which she could not manufacture. This arrangement naturally has two advantages, viz., the possibility of providing more home economics kits because of the lowering of the per unit cost, and also enabling the students to be taught with the familiar utensils which they would be using after the course.

Experts: There are experts and experts: some very good, some rather good and some not helpful and fortunately the last category is only a very small minority. The quality and attitude of experts could make tremendous difference to the success and impact of the project. Generally speaking, the Colombo Plan experts are well selected whereas the quality of the experts from International agencies are rather uneven although there are many outstanding ones too. The basic quality of an expert is not only the competence in his field but also the possession of goodwill, sympathy and understanding of the country, its peoples and their problems, and prevailing conditions of the country while appreciating their natural and legitimate aspirations. The tactfulness in handling and good human relations are also great assets.

In the writer's association with foreign assistance personnel for over twenty years, about half of which in the responsible position in the Ministry of Education, many experts had been encountered some of whom are outstanding, leaving lasting impact on the colleagues they had worked with. Examples of three outstanding experts whom the writer knew personally have been chosen for illustration although the writer would be the first to admit that the number who have made significant contribution and lasting impact are many.

The first was an ILO expert who was full of dedication to his work and who lived and slept on the project and eventually died in the duty station. He was associated with the curriculum development of pre-vocational education. For every lesson, he developed it himself working, experimenting while using local raw materials as far as possible. He applied the basic principles to the local conditions giving a very useful illustration of adaptation of foreign technology to all colleagues he worked with.

The second is a Colombo Plan expert on photogrammetry. He is full of ideas and probably slightly eccentric - bouncing along and instilling enthusiasm to everybody surrounding him. He made requests, followed them up and eventually 'bullying' his own government to providing a laboratory of his specification. He was always thinking of new avenues and even suggested a most useful idea of making a photogrammetric recording of all the major and important pagodas and temples of Pagan - an ancient tenth century capital of Burma. Unfortunately, his idea could not be followed up through lack of financing and within a year of his proposal, Pagan suffered a disastrous earthquake destroying many temples.

The third is a UNESCO expert on seismology who made a strong and lasting impact despite never being provided with any instrument or equipment. He devoted himself to a study of earthquakes in Burma

travelling all over the country collecting evidences, making field studies and consulting previous work and records abroad while on home leave. Although Burma lies in the earthquake zone, seismology has been a neglected field and he repaired this omission by producing a classic work on the earthquakes, seismicity and seismotectonics of Burma which after twenty years still remains a source of reference which all major construction projects have to refer to and all later earthquakes explained.

Since experts are human, events due to human weaknesses are bound to occur. Unfortunately, some of these events could become national embarrassments. Some unpleasant examples with undesirable consequences reflecting on the unfair image on all the experts may perhaps be illustrated by the following examples.

Because of her foreign exchange difficulties, Burma had to limit the import of motor vehicles of all kinds and since the local car assembly and production is insufficient, the cars fetch prices incommensurate with their values. In fact, at one time the proceeds of a good second hand car could well maintain an expatriate family for two to three years easily. It leads to the experts never converting a single dollar of his remuneration and making a large overdraft from the bank and repaying only at the end of his assignment from the proceeds of the sale of his car which he was allowed to import free of duty and taxes. This legal loophole was discovered by the Government later leading to the denial of overdraft to all experts by the banks which incidentally are all state-owned.

Another case is more personal. An expert imported a car with Government's permission and resold it soon after its arrival with a great profit and then requested the Government to provide him with transport. Since he has been allowed to import a car, the Government

naturally refused his request leading to very unpleasant scenes and poor reflection on the experts.

The third case is more work-related. In one project, the expert prepared a report which is thought provoking with many useful suggestions and recommendations. Unfortunately, the language used has been so strong casting reflection on the competency of the whole institution and its staff who in the last analysis have to implement the proposals. The counterpart staff claimed that the expert never discussed the problems with them some of which had been unavoidable and could be explained. Because of the bad relations developed by the report, the whole institution became very antagonistic to the report and its author who happened to be in the country for about only three months. In the writer's experience, a good report is one which not only contains a thorough analysis of the problem and good suggestions and recommendations, but it must also have been thoroughly discussed with the people concerned with a sympathy and understanding of their problems and couched in such a language which is firm but taking into account the human sensitivities.

However, Burma has been fortunate in having most of the Resident Representatives of the UNDP, Representatives of other International Organisations and visiting multilateral and bilateral aid officials with understanding, a spirit of accomodation and an appreciation of the country's position and her difficulties.

Fellowships and Training Problems: The problems in this sphere are three-fold: selection, placement and utilisation. The selection procedure in Burma is arduous and long resulting in delay sometimes upsetting the time-schedule of the project. Sometimes, the approval of the selected candidate by the Agency is not much faster either. The importance of timely selection of fellowships in a project is not always

appreciated by the national authorities. The other problem concerns selecting fellows who are not connected with the project and are thus not aware of the nature and needs of the project. At times, the person selected is on the verge of retirement thus limiting the period of his usefulness to the project and the country while at other times the same people tend to monopolise the opportunities thus denying the possibility of enlarging the circle of people receiving training, while in some projects people are trained and changed at such a rate that continuity is lost.

In placement of fellows for training, the agencies sometimes do not spend enough time enquiring about the institutions leading to the placement of candidates at institutions where no relevant or required training facilities exist. The general tendency of many developing countries including Burma is to send to European and American universities and training establishments because the national counterpart officials now leading the projects tend to select their alma mater ignoring other possibilities, especially training facilities in the region which are probably more suitable where conditions and problems might be more similar. It is one avenue in training which needs further exploration and utilisation.

Although it is not acute, the problem of proper utilisation of returned trainees exists. The most common complaint seems to be promotion and transfer of the trainees to a job (especially administrative) little related to the training he has previously received.

Another problem which tends to create friction and misunderstanding in the country is the inservice training and workshops held inside the country but financed by an outside agency. The per diem given by the International Organisations tends to be about ten times higher than normally given in the country leading to maneuvouring amongst the candidates and unnecessary friction between colleagues. The reasonable per diem rate might be about twice the local rate which

would meet the needs of the candidate but not large enough to create friction among them. It has an added advantage of training more people than originally planned with the same budget.

Role of UNESCO: It is not really a problem but which creates many disillusions to many institutions in developing countries. The UNESCO is a Specialised Agency of the United Nations responsible for education and serves as the executing agency for many projects financed by UNDP and UNICEF. However, UNESCO is identified unfairly perhaps as rich in brains but without much muscle as UNESCO has so little resources of its own to finance even the projects identified by itself. A case in point has been the project on modernisation of the library and documentation services of the university. Since the university libraries rate a very low priority without any economic potential, a most essential service in higher education and research and a centre for preservation of ancient culture remains underserved and neglected.

Prospects

It is difficult to predict and the prospects look gloomy. If Government's priority for education remains low and the donor governments and multilateral aid agencies follow this trend, International Cooperation in Education is bound to decrease.

There are still several areas in education which could be greatly improved and developed with international inputs. In the light of the writer's experience in education in Burma, the following areas seem to be most promising for future international cooperation:

Primary Education: It is the most important sector where 80 per cent of the students study and for which one-third of educational expenditure is incurred. Although 1975 has been previously planned as the goal for introducing the universal free compulsory primary education of five

years, the target has been abandoned later due to economic and financial difficulties of supporting it at the present stage of economic development. The enrolment ratio as shown in Table 11 indicates reaching the peak of 89 per cent in 1970-71 and stagnating thereafter at around 86 - 87 per cent.

Table 11

Enrolment Ratio for the Primary student Age Group

(Age 5 - 9) (Thousands)

Year	Population	Enrolment	Enrolment Ratio (per cent)
1962-63	3,044	1,746	57.4
1966-67	3,235	2,634	81.4
1967-68	3,344	2,791	83.5
1968-69	3,418	2,857	83.6
1969-70	3,495	3,015	86.3
1970-71	3,572	3,178	89.0
1971-72	3,652	3,199	87.6
1972-73	3,735	3,280	87.8
1973-74	3,817	3,300	86.5
1974-75	3,901	3,404	87.3
1975-76	3,987	3,476	87.2
1976-77	4,075	3,504	86.0

Source : Burma Education Research Bureau

It is a national problem requiring national solution through national efforts. The attainment of the compulsory primary education in the near future under the current economic situation might demand taking drastic measures like curtailing the intended period of schooling by one year (especially the first year of 5-year olds), use of the Buddhist monastic buildings and monks as teachers taking measures to maintain the secularity of the State, etc. International assistance could provide expertise with experience in other developing countries, provision of supplies for teaching materials and cheaper text books and reading materials,

introduction of informal education methods and facilities, support for more effective teaching and learning methods, introduction of a suitable level of educational technology, exchange of experience, etc.

Curriculum Development: Despite all the efforts exerted during the last decade and a half, the Burmese schools still remain to a large degree centres of outmoded and outdated learning process. It is still teacher-centred "teaching" rather than student-centred "learning". Curriculum development has developed into a fine art and Burma offers an open field for experimentation and development.

Science education is also an area with potential for international cooperation. Learning process needs to be reviewed and suitable equipment redesigned and produced. It is probably appropriate now to review the priorities in the aims of science education and the curriculum updated incorporating various experiences of other developing countries.

Effective Diversification & Preparation for Diversification: Effective Diversification has been an educational ideal of successive Burmese national leaders and also of many national leaders of the newly independent and developing countries. The effective solution remains elusive not only because of the cost involved and cost of the high import content, the society's values and outlook inherited from its feudal and colonial past also remain factors with great deterrent effects. Support for expansion of technical, agricultural and vocational education remains an open field for international cooperation with scope for training of skilled and semi-skilled manpower needed for the economic development of the

country and at the same time help introduce new values and outlook.

Pre-vocational education was introduced in Burma in 1974 with the aim of preparing the students for life outside the schools and also of introducing a system which is work-oriented. The UNESCO has very ably identified the project; however the progress of the project has been slow due to lack of external support to finance inevitable imports of equipment and materials.

Establishment or support of professional institutes and specialised laboratories, training of specialists related to the country's needs and promotion of research : Burma probably is overproducing graduates in many fields of studies - more than it can absorb or need. However, strong post-graduate and research programmes still need to be established as otherwise an appropriate indigenous technology could never be established in the country. Laboratories and research programmes specialising in the efficient utilisation of the country's products and resources offer excellent opportunities for international and regional cooperation. Exchanges of experiences including publications could help promote development and understanding accelerating the process of adaptation of imported technology and adoption of an indegenous technology.

Education Research: It is a relatively new field of endeavour and international and regional cooperation could only improve its work on the study of the country's educational problems, its experiments, innovations and adaptation of educational technology.

Documentation Services and Library System: One of the weakest area in all developmental work in Burma is the scarcity of data and its improper maintenance. The library network also remains underdeveloped and suffering through lack of adequate financing especially for those which have to be imported. There are many old historical documents

(some of single copies) requiring preservation and duplication. A modern documentation service with a developed library system would undoubtedly be of great service to the country and her scholars and researchers.

Informal Education: This is probably one area where Burma could offer her useful experience. Burma has promoted successfully the active participation of segments of society, other than the State, in the cause of education. Adults, communities, industrial and other establishments have all contributed to the service which society is undertaking so that the young generation may receive an appropriate education. At the same time, the educational sector provides the opportunities where these segments of society can contribute to its development as a whole. Under the auspices of people's participation in education, communities build all the primary schools and build, extend or repair secondary and other schools, sports grounds or other facilities. Industries also provide facilities for the students to enable them to obtain experience of production and working life which they would have to enter one day. Communities look after the schools as their own and provide services to lessen the burden on the State. Thus, the society that provides education as a service is understood by its school children as something which is not remote and abstract, but which is the human environment within which they live.

The university and school students are also involved in the activities for the development of the country. During the last decade, they were involved in taking a nation-wide census, the first to be taken since 1941; economic and social surveys; scientific data collecting; teaching in the school system and also to informal groups; construction of universities and schools, industries and roads; planting and harvesting of crops, etc. The most significant contribution that

students have made to society so far has been within the framework of the literacy campaigns. Students "participate voluntarily, pay their own fares and expenses, and by living in the villages not only do they teach, but they offer all kinds of assistance from digging wells to harvesting. In 1971 7,800 (university) students participated in the programme." 6/ The combined efforts of the community leaders, teachers, university and secondary students and the learners alike have contributed to the success of the literacy campaigns in Burma, raising the national literacy rate to 70 per cent leading to the award in 1971 by UNESCO of the Shah Reza Pahlavi Prize for outstanding achievements in eradicating adult illiteracy. The writer is proud to have the honour of associating with the movement as its chairman for nine years until 1974. The most important features of Burma's literacy campaigns have been ably summarised by a Unesco document 7/ as follows:

- literacy campaigns are organised as high-impact projects, i.e. all resources are concentrated on a selected region, rather than being scattered here and there;
- no sophisticated techniques are employed, but courses are held in any convenient place at any convenient time;
- the majority of those teaching in the campaigns are not teachers by professions (although they, too, are involved), but young volunteers recruited from universities and teacher training institutions;

6/ The Economy of the Union of Burma, IBRD, 1972.

7/ Union of Burma: Education for social development, UNESCO, 1973, p.35.

- there is a sufficient amount of reading matter for the neo-literate, both through collections of books and magazines organised by school children all over the country, and from the Government;

- the campaigns draw on the high motivation of the volunteers, but also of the learners who realise that learning to read and write is a debt they owe to society;

- literacy drives are high-profile events, surrounded and supported by visits from political leaders in the respective areas, by gay ceremonies for the opening and closing of the campaigns, and by press and radio coverage;

- although not conceived as functional literacy projects, they often result in improvements in traditional village life, as students living in the villages with the villagers for the entire duration of the campaign often take initiatives to which villagers are responsive, since mutual confidence between "teachers" and learners can develop fully.

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